



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney  
Eastern District of California*

*501 I Street, Suite 10-100  
Sacramento, California 95814*

*916/554-2700  
Fax 916/554-2900*

FOR RELEASE  
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**CALIFORNIA MILLION DOLLAR LOTTERY WINNER  
SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT AFTER BEING CONVICTED OF  
LEADING METHAMPHETAMINE ORGANIZATION IN FRESNO, CALIFORNIA**

FRESNO--United States Attorney John K. Vincent announced today that RAFAEL QUIROZ, 37, of Colima, Mexico, was sentenced Monday, July 2, 2001, to a term of life imprisonment for conducting a continuing criminal enterprise. QUIROZ was convicted on September 9, 2000 after a two-week trial on federal charges that he headed a multi-county methamphetamine manufacturing organization which operated methamphetamine laboratories in Madera, Butte, Sutter, San Mateo, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino counties. A federal jury returned verdicts of guilty after just four hours of deliberations, finding that Quiroz violated the federal drug "Kingpin" statute by conducting a continuing criminal enterprise (CCE) over a six-year period beginning in June of 1992 and ending in May of 1998. The jury also found that the defendant must forfeit approximately \$4.3 million that represents the value of the methamphetamine produced by the organization. Quiroz previously won \$1 million from the California lottery after appearing on the Big-Spin in 1989. On November 30, 2000, the district court ordered this asset forfeited pursuant to the jury verdict.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Kathleen A. Servatius, who is prosecuting the case, the evidence at trial proved that the QUIROZ organization was responsible for manufacturing in excess of 2300 pounds of methamphetamine since 1994 at laboratory sites

located throughout California, including Madera and Sutter Counties in Central California, as well as Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties. The methamphetamine was distributed to other locations throughout California, as well as to Nebraska, Kansas City, Missouri, Texas, and Portland, Oregon. The evidence also showed that Quiroz used the lottery winnings to finance his drug manufacturing activities.

Raul CHAVEZ, 21, of San Jose, California, was also convicted of conspiring to make methamphetamine and is currently serving a 30-year term of imprisonment after sentencing on December 18, 2000. Other defendants in the case have also been sentenced including: Jose Gustavo QUIROZ-Montejano, 49 of East Palo Alto, who is serving a ten-year term of imprisonment after pleading guilty to distributing methamphetamine; Ramiro PEREZ, 59, of Gridley, California who is serving an 87-month term of imprisonment after pleading guilty to distributing methamphetamine; Jose Manuel QUIROZ, 33, who serving a 108-month sentence after pleading guilty to conspiring to make methamphetamine; and Jesus Arzate Espinoza, 31, of Mountain View, California, who serving a 2-year term of imprisonment after pleading guilty to money laundering charges. Another defendant in the case, Felipe Alvarez, 24, of Hillsboro, Oregon, is currently in custody awaiting his August 21, 2001 trial.

This case is the product of a long-term joint Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force investigation by the California Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, and Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division. Other participating agencies include the Fresno Police Department, Sutter County Sheriff's Department, Riverside County Sheriff's Office, Ontario Police Department, California Highway Patrol, Portland Police Department and Nebraska Highway Patrol.

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